

KERN WATER BANK AUTHORITY



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KERN WATER BANK RECHARGING WATER

The Kern Water Bank is recharging water in response to recent heavy precipitation and an increase in the California State Water Project allocation to 50 percent. It is expected that upwards of 60,000 acre feet will be recharged during the month of January. With continued favorable precipitation, groundwater recharge may extend beyond January.

The water, which has been held in storage in reservoirs in the State Water Project by KWB participants, must be moved to make way for water expected to result from recent rain and snow. "This is what the water bank was built to do and it's great that we have the ability to store this water," said Jon Parker, general manager of KWB. "The water will help replenish groundwater supplies in the Bakersfield area and the surrounding agricultural lands."

The water is stored in the underground aquifer for use later on farms and in urban Bakersfield. KWB participants built the water bank in order to store water when it is available, and recover it later when water is needed. Participants in KWB are Dudley Ridge Water District, Kern County Water Agency on behalf of its Improvement District 4, Semitropic Water Storage District, Tejon-Castac Water District, Westside Mutual Water Company and Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa Water Storage District.

The bank is operated for the benefit of more than 400 farmers with holdings in the service areas of the KWB participating entities. A wide variety of crops are grown on these farms, including almonds, grapes, citrus, alfalfa, and pistachios. Additionally, tens of thousands of residents in the City of Bakersfield and County of Kern benefit from the banking program.

The KWB has approximately 7,000 acres of recharge ponds, 85 recovery wells, 23 miles of pipeline, and a 6-mile long canal. Approximately 1,875 acres of recharge ponds are currently being utilized for recharge operations.

Note to editors: The Kern Water Bank attracts a large population of wildlife, especially when water is recharging. Bird populations are currently high. If you would like to photograph this wildlife, please contact Cheryl Harding at 398-4900 to arrange access.